



# Draft Coordinated In-Year Admissions Scheme

**Guidance on the admission of  
children outside of the normal entry  
points.**

January 2024

## Introduction

This document outlines the coordinated in-year school admissions scheme in Telford and Wrekin. These arrangements have been written in collaboration with the School Admissions Working Group, as directed by the Local Admissions Forum and are written in accordance with the mandatory requirements of the [School Standards and Framework Act 1998](#) (as per the [School Admissions Code 2021](#)) and [Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) (outlined in '[Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#)' 2022 guidance).

In March 2022, the government launched its '[Opportunity for All](#)' white paper outlining its ambitions for the education sector. Whilst the schools bill has not progressed through parliament, the Local Authority (LA) understands the intention is for it to be mandatory once again for local authorities to coordinate in-year admissions in future.

There is currently no requirement for own admission authorities (i.e. academies, foundation and voluntary aided schools) to be part of a centrally coordinated in-year admissions scheme overseen by the local authority. However, following consultation with the Education Strategic Partnership Board, the Local Admission Forum, and Primary and Secondary Executive and Headteacher groups, the Local Authority believes that co-ordinating in-year admissions is the most effective way for ensuring that children out of school are tracked, monitored, and placed in education as quickly as possible. This safeguarding element has been a particular strength of in-year coordination since its introduction and there is a substantial risk that vulnerable children and young people may slip '[Between the Cracks](#)', if local authorities adopt a system whereby applications are made direct to individual schools. Own admission authorities are therefore urged to abide with Local Authority procedures for coordinating in-year admissions.

It is Telford and Wrekin's aim therefore, to coordinate in-year admissions as a Local Authority for all schools and own admission authorities within its area.

This does not apply to application and admission process of children with an [Education, Health and Care Plan \(EHCP\)](#) which are handled separately by the [SEND Team](#).

### Summary of the Telford and Wrekin In-Year Admissions Scheme:

- Applicants wanting to apply for schools and academies within Telford and Wrekin **must** apply using the [LAs Online In-Year Application Form](#). Applicants can name up to **four schools** in order of preference.
- Telford and Wrekin residents wishing to apply for schools in other boroughs **must** apply according to that LA's admission arrangements. This may involve applying to the admission authority directly (via the school) or to the relevant LA.
- It is critical that the School Admissions Team hold up-to-date information about school vacancies so that correct advice can be provided to parents. Schools **must** maintain accurate roll numbers using the SAM (School Admission Module) Portal.
- The formal application outcome will be sent via email to parents by the School Admissions Team.
- The Telford and Wrekin School Admissions Team will directly administer community and voluntary controlled school admissions, including waiting lists.
- Own admission authority schools will administer their own waiting lists and determine whether a place can be offered in liaison with the School Admissions Team. Voluntary aided schools and faith-based academies will use a supplementary information form for applicants applying for a place on faith grounds.

- All schools, including own admission authority schools, are reminded that they **must** fill vacancies in any year group where the number of pupils on roll is below their published admission number (PAN) irrespective of their admissions criteria.
- Unsuccessful applicants have a right of appeal to an independent appeal panel. Own admission authorities **must** make arrangements for their appeal hearings, although the LA will be able to facilitate this.

### **Published Admission Numbers (PANs)**

1. The admission numbers of all primary and secondary schools are set out in the LAs admissions booklet. This is the number of children that a school is expected to admit in each year group based on the capacity of the school.

### **Applications**

2. This scheme applies to all applicants for maintained schools, academies and own admission authority schools within Telford and Wrekin.
3. Applications **must** be made on the [LAs Online In-Year Application Form](#) via the Parent Portal available on the School Admissions webpage. The School Admissions Team and staff based in schools, libraries and customer services will support parents who have difficulty applying online. In exceptional circumstances, a paper application form will be made available by the School Admissions Team.
4. Applicants can express a preference for up to four LA maintained schools and own admission authority schools within Telford and Wrekin.
5. Any preferences made for own admission authority schools in Telford and Wrekin will be available for schools/academies to view using the SAM Portal. If an own admission authority school receive applications directly, they **must** advise the applicant they must complete the [LAs Online In-Year Application Form](#) and notify the School Admissions Team.
6. The order of preference given on the [LAs Online In-Year Application Form](#) will not be available to individual schools.
7. Own admission authorities within Telford and Wrekin may use supplementary information forms where there is not sufficient information on the [LAs Online In-Year Application Form](#) for consideration of the application against the published oversubscription criteria. The supplementary form should be completed and returned to the school/academy directly. Own admission authorities **must** ensure that supplementary forms only collect information that is required by the published oversubscription criteria, in accordance with the [School Admissions Code 2021](#).
8. Where an own admission authority school in Telford and Wrekin receives a supplementary information form, it will advise the parent/carer to complete the [LAs Online In-Year Application Form](#) to formally apply for a school place.
9. Telford and Wrekin will confirm the status of any resident child for whom it receives an [LAs Online In-Year Application Form](#) stating s/he is a child looked after, became subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order, and will notify all own admission authorities listed on the application of this.

### **Processing Applications**

10. The School Admissions Team will import applications submitted online via Parent Portal **within 2 working days**.

11. Where the [LAs Online In-Year Application Form](#) is incomplete, the applicant will be notified the application is invalid until all the information is received. If the child is without a school place then an offer or allocation will be made whilst the relevant information is obtained.
12. Applicants for children that are already attending a school in Telford and Wrekin will show on the Leavers Report on the SAM Portal. Current schools should monitor this report to discuss why parents are seeking a place at an alternative school and address any concerns/issues that a family may have about their current school.
13. Own admission authorities will be able to view details of children who have applied for a place at their school.
14. To determine the availability of places, all Telford and Wrekin schools and academies **must** provide the School Admissions Team, on request, their roll number and vacancies for each year group **within 2 school days**. This is a **statutory requirement** in line with the [School Admissions Code](#).
15. Applications will be considered in line with the admissions arrangements and oversubscription criteria for each school and academy. Own admission authorities are responsible for determining their admissions arrangements in line with the [School Admissions Code](#) and making decisions based on the admission arrangements.
16. All schools and academies **must** also maintain an accurate record of their roll numbers across all year groups using the SAM Portal **within 5 school days** of a child starting or leaving. Where pupil numbers have not changed all schools and academies **must** confirm their roll numbers every **10 school days** using the SAM Portal.
17. All schools/academies **must** seek to offer any available places to those that have applied based on the oversubscription criteria for the school/academy. The School Admissions Team will liaise with own admission authorities to confirm who should be offered places.

#### **Notification of Outcome: General**

18. The School Admissions Team will aim to notify the outcome of an application by email **within 10 school days**. However, the processing of applications may take **up to 15 school days**. The application outcome email will advise the following:
  - a. The name of the school at which a place is offered.
  - b. If applicable, the reason why the child is not being offered a place at any of the other schools they named on the [application form](#).
  - c. The opportunity to be added to a waiting list and their right of appeal for any higher preference schools which could not be offered.
  - d. If applicable, that the child will be considered for placement by the Fair Access Panel, either as a 'hard to place'/vulnerable child or because there are no places available at local schools within a reasonable distance to the home address.
19. All schools and academies will be notified by the School Admissions Team when an offer has been made to a child to attend their school. Further details for the child and family will be available on the SAM Portal.
20. Where it is evident that more than one place can be offered, the School Admissions Team will eliminate all but the highest ranked offer where an applicant has ranked schools/academies in order of preference on the [LAs Online In-Year Application Form](#). Any lower preferences will be withdrawn at this point.

### **Notification of Outcome: Children Without a School Place**

21. Parents of children living in Telford and Wrekin who cannot be offered a place at any of their preferred schools/academies will be advised of which local schools/academies have places available. Parents are encouraged to apply to at least one of these schools.
22. The School Admissions Team will track and monitor children without a school place and where possible will aim allocate a place at the catchment area or nearest school or academy with an available place **within 15 school days**.
23. In the event that there are no places available at local schools/academies within a reasonable distance from the applicant's home address, the School Admissions Team will refer the child to be placed by the Fair Access Panel **within 15 school days** of the referral, in line with the [School Admissions Code](#).
24. All Telford and Wrekin schools (including own admission authorities) **must** adhere to the requirement to admit children referred by the Fair Access Panel under the provision of the locally agreed protocol, as required by the [School Admissions Code](#).

### **Notification of Outcome: Children who are currently in school (school transfer)**

25. Where an offer can be made for a child currently on roll at another Telford and Wrekin school, the School Admissions Team will notify the child's current school at the same time as the new school that an offer has been made.
26. The current school is expected to complete and send the Pupil Passport ([primary version/secondary version](#)) directly to the new school **within 5 school days** of the offer notification. This enables the new school to plan the child's transition to their new school.
27. Where information on the Pupil Passport ([primary version/secondary version](#)) from the current school indicates that the child meets the 'hard to place'/vulnerable criteria in the Fair Access Protocol, the school can refer the child back to the School Admissions Team **within 5 school days** of the offer notification for consideration by the Fair Access Panel.
28. Where the Pupil Passport is not received, the new school is still expected to admit the child **within 5 school days** of the offer notification.

### **Post Offer**

29. School offers are automatically considered to be accepted by parents. Schools are required to place children on their admissions register and assume safeguarding responsibilities for the child. This is a **statutory requirement** in line with [Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#).
30. Schools and academies are expected to contact families and arrange for them to be admitted **within 5 school days** of the offer notification.
31. Schools and academies **must** update their SAM portal with the start date for all children admitted in-year **within 5 school days** of them starting school. This includes those that are offered places via the Fair Access Panel and those that are allocated places following an admission appeal decision in favour of parents.
32. Where the school/academy are unable to contact the family within relevant timeframe and the child is without a school place they **must** complete a Child Missing Education (CME) referral and return this to the Attendance Support Team **within 10-15 school days** of the offer notification. The school/academy is expected to have made several

attempts to contact the family before making a referral, including by phone, email/letter, and a home visit.

33. Only where there is no response, and it can be demonstrated that every effort has been made to contact the family, will the offer of a place be withdrawn. The Attendance Support Team will follow this up in line with duties surrounding Children Missing Education (CME).
34. In cases where an offer of a school place has been rejected and it is evident that no alternative education has been arranged for the child by the parent/carer, school/academy **must** complete a Child Missing Education (CME) referral and return this to the Attendance Support Team **within 2 school days**.
35. The Ensuring Access to Education for All (EAEA) panel will maintain oversight of children in the admissions process as part of the LA's duties surrounding Children Missing Education (CME).
36. Where a family decides that they no longer wish for the child to transfer to another school and instead wish for the child to continue to attend their current school, the new school informs the School Admissions Team **within 2 school days** so that the offer can be withdrawn and the place be offered to another child. Families may also inform the School Admissions Team directly and any offered places will be withdrawn.
37. Once a school offer is made, any other applications/preferences will be withdrawn and families will need to reapply if they wish to be added to the waiting lists for any further schools.

### Waiting Lists

38. Where a child is offered a place at one of the preferred schools listed on an [application form](#) or an alternative school, the child will be removed from the waiting list for all other schools listed on the application. Parents/carers may request to be added to the waiting list for their higher preference school(s).
39. Children will remain on the waiting list until they are either offered a place at one of their preferred schools or an alternative school and up until the end of the academic year. Where parents/carers wish to remain on the waiting list for a place at their preferred schools in the following academic year, they will need to reapply during the summer holidays by completing the [LAs Online In-Year Application Form](#).
40. The waiting lists for all Telford and Wrekin community and voluntary controlled schools will be held and administered by the School Admissions Team for all year groups and will be ordered in accordance with the published admission criteria. Parents/carers that approach community schools direct, that want to be added to a waiting list, will be required to complete [LAs Online In-Year Application Form](#).
41. Own admission authorities will maintain their own waiting lists. When a place can be offered, the school will provide the School Admissions Team with the details of the child that they have determined as the next eligible child on the list in accordance with their admission criteria.
42. Children who are subject of a direction by the LA to admit or who are allocated to a school in accordance with the Fair Access Protocol must take precedence over those on a waiting list.

### Appeals

43. Parents have the right of appeal against the refusal of a place at any of the schools for which they have applied. The School Admissions Team **must** therefore inform parents



of their right of appeal, and the arrangements for doing so, where a school place cannot be offered.

44. Appeals for community schools, voluntary controlled schools and any own admission authority schools who have arranged for the LA to facilitate their appeal hearings **must** be lodged through the Parent Portal within 20 school days of their application outcome.
45. The Democratic Services Team will arrange for in-year admission appeals to be heard within 30 school days.
46. Own admission authority schools who decide to make alternative arrangements are responsible for ensuring that these are compliant with the [School Admission Appeals Code](#).

### Ensuring Fairness and Resolving Issues

47. Own admission authorities are responsible for making admission decisions based on the oversubscription criteria in their admission arrangements. The Local Authority are not responsible for the decisions made by schools/academies where it is not the admission authority.
48. Where a child is refused admission to a school and a parent wishes to challenge this decision, this must be addressed through the appeal process.
49. Complaints involving the processing of school applications should be lodged through the [Customer Relationship Team](#). The Customer Relationship Team are not able to address complaints involving admission decisions as there is a separate statutory process to appeal these decisions.
50. Complaints about schools should be directed to the school directly and are handled in line with the school's complaints procedure.
51. The School Admissions Team will monitor admissions to ensure that children are admitted **within 5 school days** and a start date entered on the system **within 10 school days** or a Child Missing Education (CME) referral received **within 15 school days** of the offer notification.
52. Where school/academy refuses to admit a child, cases will be escalated to the School Admissions Team Leader **within 2 school days** who will consult with the Headteacher and governing body/academy trust.
53. The School Admissions Team Leader, in consultation with the Service Delivery Manager: Access & Sufficiency/ Director: Education and Skills, may decide to notify the Headteacher and governing body/academy trust that it intends to direct the school/academy to admit and give **15 school days'** notice.
54. For maintained schools, the governing body may appeal the direction by referring the case the Schools Adjudicator **within 15 school days**. The governing body must inform the LA that a referral to the Schools Adjudicator has been made.
55. If the governing body decides not to appeal the maintained school will receive a direction letter from the Director: Education and Skills and the school **must** admit the child **within 5 school days**.
56. For academies, where the issue has not been resolved **within 15 school days** of the intention to direct notification, the Director: Education and Skills may seek a direction via the Education and Skills Funding Agency on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education.

## Own Admission Authorities Opting Out

57. Own admission authorities are strongly urged to be part of the LA's coordinated in-year admissions scheme. This ensures that children without a school place can be identified, placed and admitted to school as soon as possible. There are significant safeguarding benefits to in-year admissions being centrally coordinated by the LA and this feeds into our ambitions to deliver better educational outcomes for children. In-year coordination also reduces the administrative burden on school staff so they can focus on the delivery of high quality education, managing behaviour, and improving attendance.
58. Where an own admission authority decides to manage their own in-year admissions, they **must** ensure that their admission processes are fully compliant with the [School Admissions Code](#). Own admission authorities who wish to opt out of the LA scheme for the following academic year **must** inform the School Admissions Team by **1 August**.
59. Own admission authorities that opt out of the LA scheme **must** still provide the School Admissions Team, on request, their roll number and vacancies for each year group **within 2 school days**. This is a **statutory requirement** in line with the [School Admissions Code](#).
60. Where an own admission authority manages its own in-year admissions, it **must** also notify the LA of every application and its outcome **within 2 school days**, to allow the LA to keep up to date figures on the availability of places in the area and to ensure they are aware of any children who may not have a school place. Again, this is a **statutory requirement** of the [School Admissions Code](#).



**Annex A: In-year admissions process – from application to offer.**

[In-Year Application Form](#) submitted online via Parent Portal with up to four school preferences. Parents will also need to complete Supplementary Information Forms (SIFs) and return these directly to schools where required.

The School Admissions Team download and import application details onto the system **within 2 working days.**

Schools applied to will be able to view application details on the SAM Portal. Where a child currently attends a school in Telford and Wrekin, the current school will be able to view application details on the Leavers Report on the SAM Portal. Current schools can discuss reasons for parents applying for a place at another school and address any underlying concerns/issues parents may have.

The School Admissions Team will process applications **within 10-15 school days.** To facilitate this all schools must confirm their on roll numbers in the SAM Portal every **10 school days** minimum and **within 2 school days** upon request from the School Admissions Team.

Where a place can be offered at a preferred school, the current school (where applicable), offered school and parent will be notified by email. The child's details are shared securely with schools via the SAM portal.

Where a place cannot be offered and the child is without a school place, parents will be provided with a list of schools with places available and encouraged to apply.

Where a place cannot be offered and the child has a school place, they continue to attend their current school. Parents can opt to remain on the waiting list and/or appeal.

The School Admissions Team will allocate a place at the catchment area or nearest school with a place available **within 15 school days.**

Where it is not possible to allocate a place at a school within reasonable distance or the child meets the criteria as a vulnerable/ 'hard to place' child, the child is referred to the Fair Access Panel and a placement secured **within 15 school days** of referral.

The child has an identified school place.

## Annex B: In-year admissions process – from offer to on roll and attending school.

